

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 11632 310757Z

14

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-01

INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-15 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06 SP-02

CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-04 /070 W

----- 049432

R 310715Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6543

INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

UNCLAS CAIRO 11632

AMCONSUL PORT SAID SENDS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EWWT, EG

SUBJECT: SUEZ CANAL TRAFFIC

1. CAIRO NEWSPAPER AL AKBAR REPORTS IN AUGUST 25 INTERVIEW WITH CHAIRMAN OF SUEZ CANAL AUTHORITY THAT IN PAST 14 MONTHS OVER 16,000 VESSELS HAVE TRANSITED CANAL WHILE REVENUES FROM TRANSIT DUES IN SAME PERIOD HAVE INCREASED 500 PERCENT. ACCORDING TO ARTICLE, AVERAGE NUMBER OF VESSELS DAILY TRANSITING CANAL IS BETWEEN 50 AND 60, OF WHICH 70 PERCENT ARE CARGO VESSELS AND REMAINDER TANKERS. PRIOR TO THE CLOSURE OF CANAL THIS RATIO WAS REVERSED, WITH TANKERS MAKING UP SOME 71 PERCENT OF CANAL TRAFFIC.

2. SCA CHAIRMAN MASHOUR PREDICATED INCREASE IN TANKER TRANSITS OF 250 PERCENT WHEN FIRST STAGE OF ON-GOING WIDENING AND DEEPENING PROJECT IS COMPLETED IN LATE 1978. CONSULATE COMMENT: THIS ESTIMATE MOST LIKELY BASED ON REASONABLE BELIEF THAT 100,000 TON PLUS TANKERS NOW TRANSITING CANAL ONLY SOUTHBOUND WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE RETURN VOYAGE THROUGH CANAL, AS WELL AS ADDITION OF 250,000 TON PLUS VESSELS SOUTHBOUND IN BALLAST WHICH THE CANAL CANNOT NOW ACCOMODATE. SIGNED SURBER.
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EILTS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DATA, INTERNATIONAL CANALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976CAIRO11632
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760329-1310
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976085/aaaaaddw.tel
Line Count: 61
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: harterdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 JAN 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 MAY 2004 by ReddocGW>; RELEASED <11 JAN 2005 by harterdg>; APPROVED <14 JAN 2005 by harterdg>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SUEZ CANAL TRAFFIC
TAGS: EWWT, EG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006